



**County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

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May 30, 2014

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
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Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning
Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "P. Browning", is written over the printed name and title.

**QUARTERLY UPDATE - RESPONSE TO ENSURING FOOD SECURITY FOR YOUTH WHO
AGE OUT OF FOSTER CARE BOARD MOTION (ITEM NO. 3, AGENDA OF
DECEMBER 13, 2011)**

On December 13, 2011, by motion of Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, with an amendment by Supervisor Antonovich, the Board of Supervisors directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the then Interim Directors of the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to develop and implement a plan to ensure complete CalFresh applications are timely and successfully submitted on behalf of foster youth, ages 18-21, when dependency is terminated. Also, the CEO, DPSS, and DCFS are to report back quarterly on the County's improved rates of successfully enrolling aging-out foster youth into CalFresh.

The amendment by Supervisor Antonovich directed the Chief Executive Officer, the then Interim Directors of DCFS and Probation Department, in consultation with Faith-Based community partners, County-contracted providers, youth and foundations, to: (1) develop a comprehensive resource guide for all food banks, food closets and public programs for provision to all exiting youth; (2) solicit donations of food store gift cards from the community and community foundations for distribution to youth in need; (3) enhance the availability of nutritional food information and programs on budgeting, shopping, cost comparison and meal planning to aging-out youth; and (4) develop an outcomes evaluation mechanism by which to measure the long-term impacts of each type of food security assistance resource upon the futures of Los Angeles County aging-out youth.

Quarterly Update for January 1, 2014 through March 31, 2014

For the period of January 2014 through March 2014, 219 foster youth terminated jurisdiction; however, only 92 were eligible to have CalFresh applications filed on their behalf by DCFS. The remaining 127 youth terminated jurisdiction, but at the time of jurisdiction termination,

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CalFresh applications either could not be filed on their behalf (runaways), or were not needed due to factors such as, incarceration, returned home to parent, moved out of Los Angeles County jurisdiction, or were receiving DPSS benefits before they terminated jurisdiction.

DPSS received 21 applications from the first group across all available support programs, as shown in Table One below. CalFresh applications were 31% of the total applications received by DPSS by this group.

Table One – Benefits Applied for By Youth

Quarter	CalFresh	%	Medical	%	General Relief	%	CalWorks	%	Total
Jan 2014 – Mar 2014	21	31%	22	32%	21	31%	4	6%	68

The CalFresh application submittal rate of 31% is a decrease from the previous 40% compliance rate last reported to the Board for the period of July 2013 through December 2013. Several new strategies discussed below had only begun during the latter part of this reporting period or had implementation target dates into the next reporting period (April 2014 through June 2014).

Table Two reflects the disposition of all DPSS benefit applications processed for all foster youth who exited out of DCFS jurisdiction:

Table Two – January 2014 through March 2014 Benefit Filings

Programs	Approved	%	Denied	%	Pending	%	Terminated	%	Total
CalWorks	5	63%	3	37%	0	0%	0	0%	8
CalFresh	27	44%	28	46%	6	10%	0	0%	61
GR	7	18%	23	59%	7	18%	2	5%	39
Medi-Cal	34	60%	7	12%	16	28%	0	0%	57
Total	73	44%	61	37%	29	18%	2	1%	165

The Department, in partnership with DPSS, continued to employ the following strategies during this quarter to reduce food insecurity among foster youth exiting DCFS through increasing compliance with the CalFresh application requirement.

- **Update of DPSS Outreach Project (the Project)** – The Project continues to be fully implemented, with a DPSS Outreach Worker assigned to all 18 DCFS regional offices. The DCFS and DPSS Project management staff continue to meet ongoing to review the process steps involving both DCFS and DPSS staff to make necessary adjustments based on the monthly tracking reports of DCFS regional offices and the tracking reports maintained by out stationed DPSS Outreach workers.
- **Centralized CalFresh applications** – Completed CalFresh applications continue to be maintained in a centralized location within each DCFS regional office to expedite submission to out stationed DPSS staff at the time of termination of DCFS' jurisdiction.

- **Automated CalFresh Tracking System** – The internal DCFS CalFresh tracking system, developed for identification of youth who have terminated court jurisdiction and who require a completed CalFresh application, continues to be utilized in tracking CalFresh compliance by DCFS staff. DCFS also continues to require monthly CalFresh compliance reports from all regional offices to ensure an ongoing focus for this critical need for exiting foster youth.
- **Incentives for Youth Meeting with DPSS Outreach Project Staff** – The biggest challenge for completing CalFresh applications for exiting foster youth is having them meet with the DPSS Outreach Worker in DCFS regional offices. A \$50.00 monetary incentive using departmental Chafee funds was under discussion which would reward eligible youth who meet with the DPSS Outreach Worker and complete a CalFresh application as part of their exiting county jurisdiction. This strategy was implemented in February 2014. As this reporting period covers only through March 2014, it is too early to determine the impact of this strategy.
- **Benefits Enrollment Project at Edelman Children's Court** – Both DCFS and DPSS have collaborated and implemented as a six-month pilot project, a DPSS Benefits Health Care Enrollment Unit housed at Edelman Children's Court. The unit was implemented on April 9, 2014, and provides any DCFS family in need of health care coverage and supportive services (like substance abuse service coverage) from the courtrooms covering the Service Planning Area 6 offices (Vermont Corridor, Compton and Wateridge). Comprised of two full-time DPSS Outreach Workers, the unit's served population will expand in June 2014, to include exiting foster youth who may be in need of CalFresh benefits. The youth who attend their jurisdiction termination court hearing will be directed to the Unit for CalFresh application completion and submittal for any needed benefits.

Supervisor Antonovich Board Motion Amendment

The following are Supervisor Antonovich Board motion amendment updates.

- **Los Angeles County Information Line (211)** – 211's "Youth Services" website portal was actively available beginning in April 2014 based on positive reviews by key stakeholder groups such as California Youth Connection and local child advocate groups, including the Alliance for Children's Rights and Public Counsel. DCFS and 211 will collaboratively launch a comprehensive media campaign to advertise the 211 "Youth Services" portal through information materials, including flyers and information cards for youth. These materials will be distributed to, including but not limited to, all human service county departments including: Mental Health, Public Health, Community and Senior Services and Public Social Services, contracted providers who service youth and our caregiver population including foster homes, group homes, Kinship and Adoptions.

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The next quarterly update will be provided to the Board by August 29, 2014 for a CalFresh update reporting DCFS' progress for the period of April 1, 2014 through June 30, 2014 and for a final update on the Antonovich amendment.

If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:EM
HK:hk

c: Chief Executive Officer
Director, Department of Public Social Services
Chief Probation Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Deputy Chief Executive Officer